Christianity and Society

Democracy and the Nature of Man

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FALL CONFERENCE

The Fall Conference of the Fellowship will be held at Riverside Church in New York City on Monday and Tuesday, October 28th and 29th, beginning at 3:30 P.M. on Monday. At the opening session Dr. Adolf Lowe of the New School for Social Research will speak on "The Key to World Politics: Full Employment in the United States." The evening meeting will be devoted to a discussion of the Jewish situation, both in Palestine and the rest of the world. On Tuesday afternoon Dr. Clifford Stanley of the Theological Seminary in Alexandria, Virginia, will speak on practical parish problems of a Socialist Christian. At the concluding evening session Dr. Reinhold Niebuhr, who has visited England and Germany this summer, will speak on world religious and social problems.

Further details will be announced in a mailed notification.

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EDITORIALS

The World Situation

The Russian rejection of the Baruch proposals for atomic energy control and the joining of the British and American zones of occupation in Germany serve to accentuate the cleavage between Russia and the West. The refusal of the Russians to give up veto rights in the atomic authority may well mean that such an authority will be set up without the Russians, in which case it would serve as a nucleus for a western alliance. In any case, it is highly probable that the United Nations will become no more than a minimal bridge over the chasm between Russia and the West; all hopes of a stable peace will go glimmering with such a development.

It is, however, necessary despite these developments to refrain from hysteria and defeatism. The international situation is dark but not completely hopeless. There is certainly no desire on either side for war and no immediate reason why there should be conflict. The frequent analogies drawn between Russia and the Nazis are still fallacious for there is no evidence that the same dynamism impels the Russian as the Nazi strategy.

There is in fact a great deal of evidence that the Russians are primarily prompted by fear and guided by a stupid miscalculation of forces in the Western World. Some of their fears have been rendered plausible by stupidities on our side.

In Britain it is believed that the primary cause of Russian mistrust and consequent change of policy was our failure to tell the Russians that we had the bomb. Informed British opinion holds that it would not have been necessary to share the secret, but that it was a breach of comradeship to drop the bomb without telling the Russians. It is believed that Russian policy was gravely affected by this error. At any rate, the Russian fears, while excessive, are not completely implausible. That is why we may hope, not too optimistically, that a way may yet be found to break the vicious circle of mutual mistrust. Great skill, forbearance and wisdom will be required for this task, and we may lack all these virtues. But the situation is not yet hopeless.

We Face Inflation

There was something quite fantastic in the losing fight of the American people for adequate price controls in a post-war period in which even American miracles of production can not produce

sufficient goods to keep prices down by competition. The people wanted price control and so did the administration. But Congress didn't. The President heroically vetoed the first bill which would have destroyed price control completely. But all the public clamor and all the skill of the administration leaders still failed to achieve an adequate measure of price control. We are in for inflation.

What is the cause of this strange and ominous inability of government to respond to public need and the public will? Part of the difficulty undoubtedly lies in our constitutional machinery. We have an irresponsible Congress or rather an irresponsible opposition, which need not, as in parliamentary government, face the consequence of defeating an administration proposal. It has no responsibility for alternative policy. This irresponsibility grows from the conception of the balance of power in the organs of government. The executive, legislative and judicial functions are supposed to be equally balanced and to check each other. Actually they checkmate each other. We could afford this creaking constitutional machinery so long as America lived a secure life behind its ocean-moats, and rolled in wealth. But both our domestic and our foreign policy are becoming more complex and the future is ominous with the perils which our constitutional system creates. We have no simple answer for this issue. It may be that we have to suffer disaster before we touch our sacred but no longer adequate constitutional tradition.

Another difficulty in the price control fight was derived not from the machinery of government but from the temper and the lack of wisdom of an engineering nation. We are a nation of technicians. We produced goods faster and in greater abundance than any other nation in the war; and were justly proud of these miracles. It might be admitted in passing that the wealth of our raw materials contributed to our success as much as our engineering skill. Nevertheless we are mightily proficient with tools. But the difficulty with a nation of engineers is that it thinks it can solve every human problem, every question of justice in the community merely by increased production. Therefore, when our business community declared "There is no peril of inflation which more production can not solve" the nation was half inclined to believe it. There is no more stupid oligarchy in the modern world than our economic oligarchy. Its stupidities are not successfully challenged because the mind of the whole nation has been partly formed by the very prejudices which the oligarchy propagates. Thus even the socialists of this nation could declare some years ago that injustice was the result of an "economy of scarcity" and would be overcome in an "economy of plenty." That was a socialist version of the plutocratic dream of solving every problem through the creation of more wealth. The difficulty with such a solution is that a modern technical society can choke in its wealth, if it fails to distribute the increasing wealth of the machine equitably.

Another weakness is also derived from our technical-mindedness. All technical problems are precise; and demand precise answers. A technical problem is either soluble or insoluble. It is usually soluble in the long run. All great human problems are insoluble in the absolute sense; and proximate solutions

for them can be found only through a wisdom which is derived from humility. Ethical-political wisdom must know how to weigh the imponderables in human relations, which means that it must deal with human foibles without rancor. We do not have this wisdom. We are engineers; and successful engineers at that. Our success makes humility difficult.

This lack of wisdom is rather frightening; for our technical skill has made us the most powerful nation on earth. But we don't know what to do with our power. We are not malicious in using it. We are merely confused. Vast sections of the world, upon which American power impinges are thrown into confusion by our lack of sense of direction. There are fortunately some Americans with real statesman-like skill. One might mention General MacArthur and General Marshall. The fact that MacArthur should have done so well as a bearer of American power, despite his monumental personal egotism is interesting. But if his policies are studied carefully it will be noted that his personal egotism has not seriously corrupted his general sense of official modesty. That is, he recognizes what the limits of power are in governing a vanquished nation. This is a bit of wisdom which has not yet been acquired by the nation as a whole.

A nation of engineers can not easily acquire the wisdom to deal creatively with the power it holds. Let us hope that we will learn before disaster overtakes us.

A Report on Great Britain

A brief survey of the year of power of the British Labor Party gives any foreign visitor a fresh appreciation of the incomparable advantages which Britain has over both America and continental nations in the solidity of its national life and its genius for adjusting itself to new situations without a real rent in the garment of its history. Its last revolution was in the seventeenth century. Since then, it has moved from feudalism to industrial capitalism and from capitalism to socialism by gradual stages.

Thus Britain is now under a socialist government which is not only the first socialist government of history with a clear majority of the nation behind it, but which carries out many policies, which even a Tory government would have carried out and which claims support beyond the immediate circles of the party. There are, of course, people in Britain who are afraid that socialism will destroy too many liberties. But there is on the one hand no evidence that any essential liberties will be lost; and on the other hand, the nation in general is more ready to sacrifice non-essential freedoms for the sake of justice than any other people. Thus rationing is maintained and the distribution of food is more just than in either America or the continent. The average non-socialist Britisher was just as baffled by, and critical of, American policies which have led to our inflation as any socialist. There is indeed a general feeling that a nation which allows inflation, when it has more goods to distribute than all other nations, must be slightly daft. It is the natural reaction of a highly disciplined nation to our irresponsible individualism and our undue reliance upon merely technical achievements.

There are, of course, some very great unsolved problems in a system of socialist gradualism. Workers in private enter-

prises, who helped to put a socialist government in power are inclined to become increasingly restive, when their lot does not materially improve. The general impoverishment of the war increases this restiveness. Since the trade union leaders are generally a part of the government, there is, and may well continue to be, a growing cleavage between the union leadership and the rank and file. This cleavage is bound to express itself in unauthorized, rather than official, strikes.

While there is a large support of the labor party in the churches, it can not be said that the party is as intimately related to its Christian sources as it was in its early days. One thinks, for instance, of the part Methodist lay preachers played in the early days of the party. One has the impression now that Methodism has become very middle class and that its relations to the party are minimal. A left-wing in the Anglican Church has always supported the party; but the death of Archbishop Temple dissolved the kind of spiritual relation between church leadership and labor which once existed. Providence played a sad trick in removing a socialist Archbishop from the scene just when he could have done most to interpret the spiritual meaning of the political program to the nation, and the meaning of the Christian faith to the party.

It will continue to be difficult for a long time to come to relate the Socialist program to imperial policy. Britain is an empire and without its imperial connections would sink to a second rate power. The achievements in liquidating the coercive features of empire in India and Egypt are tremendous. Nevertheless the pure Socialists on the back benches are critical of Bevin's perpetuation of traditional policy. And it can hardly be denied that the party's creative achievements are balanced by a hardening of imperial policy on other fronts. Mr. Churchill recently declared that leaving Egypt made it the more necessary for the government to hold on to its strategic position in Palestine. This is not the only reason for the government's policy in Palestine, for its problems with the Arab world are greater than Americans realize. It is, however, a weakness of British foreign policy that strategic issues are never mentioned and are always covered by high moral phrases. We do enough of that sort of thing in America to understand it. I really think it is done even more unconsciously in Britain than among us. It may be an Anglo-Saxon vice, or it may be, as observed previously in these pages, the inevitable hypocrisy without which a highly moral people could not swallow the moral ambiguities of politics.

This report must close without a full consideration of the Palestinian issue. The gulf between British and American opinion on this subject is very wide. They think we are irresponsible on the issue, as indeed we are. But I think that British policy is involved in a vicious circle which requires more and more coercion and I can see no good end for it.

R. N.

The Strategy of Strikes

There can be no doubt among us about the right of the striking workers to the increased wages which are to balance the rise of living cost and to offset the increase in productivity and the resulting profit of capital. What must be examined, or rather re-examined, is the strategy of the strikes.

This strategy would make sense if the intention were to produce a "revolutionary situation" and to take advantage of it for the overthrow of the existing structure of society. Not many, and certainly not the realistic leaders of communist Russia, can share the absurd estimate of existing forces which would underlie such a program. Some time before the war, three-fourths of those canvassed in a Gallup poll declared that, in case of this exclusive alternative, they would prefer big business rule to labor union rule; and sentiment certainly has hardened since.

Ruling out the revolutionary interpretation of the strikes, we are reduced to an inquiry into their sociological and political implications within the given structure of society. One is perturbed to see that theory and practice of strikes has not changed at all while all conditions have changed very much. A strike in one business in a competitive economy did not tangibly affect consumers but did, and was designed to, affect the employer and force him to concessions. It brought home to him that his profit and his entire existence depended on the work of his employees. With the centralization of the labor market, this argument seems to have gained in strength; a strike of the workers of one industry seems to emphasize the lesson that it is they who produce the profit of that industry. But such a strike hits the consumers as well as the employers, and they do not need to sympathize with the striking workers, least of all if they are not workers themselves. Seen from the angle of production, many of the productive functions in society are attended to by people who consider themselves members of the middle class, and an unwise procedure of the striking workers can easily antagonize these strategically placed groups. The more complicated modern machinery and modern society become, the easier it is to stop them; any one of the contributing groups can do it by withholding its function. But then the strike is far from proving that the strikers are the only productive group in the industry, a claim which their strategy seems to imply. A major strike in modern society always is an attack of a section of society on the whole, and this is what labor must realize.

Some years before the war, labor in Shanghai staged a traffic strike by running all cars and buses and refusing to collect the fares. They thereby won the laughing applause of all classes and left the employers with the odious decision of shutting down the traffic in order to avoid losses. In this country the striking workers of the largest chocolate factory were thrashed, routed, and driven to work by the enraged farmers of the vicinity, who found themselves, without advance notice, deprived of the sales of their milk to the factory. The Shanghai example cannot be copied in other industries, but the point is labor should become aware of its dependence on and responsibility to others. It would be contrary to the truth to deny that some labor leaders and labor unions in recent months did show true wisdom and statesmanship without in the least weakening their case, but these are exceptions.

The blind and reckless pursuit of the economic interest is not justified by any theory influential in history. To Adam Smith interests were harmonized by the supposedly natural presence of "sympathy" in man's character. Marxians are at great pains to define the "rightly understood class interest"; whether or

not we approve of their answers to the question, they do not ignore the question of how to qualify the pursuit of economic interests. Recent practice, however, seems to be predicated on the belief that, as in international relations, so in industrial relations, the unqualified assertion of brutal power alone promises success. This is a terrifying reversal of the age-old belief that, as the instinct of aggression has been tamed in the life of the narrower community, so it must be tamed in international relations. But the worship of power is only the logical end of rational thinking, thinking in terms of interests, and its drive against anything connected with traditional moral inhibitions of an ultimately religious character. The gradual evaporation of the religious heritage makes the question more and more pressing; whether, and how, and how long there can be, without that heritage, an organized life of the community at all.

* * *

This is not a plea for pacifism, domestic or international. In this tragic world the unbridled assertion of power sometimes is the only way out of special conflicts. But wars and revolutions can never be anything but transitional stages, designed to lead to a new, more durable pattern of life. This better pattern of life cannot be had in the Western World without a Christian climate, because rational interests have no integrating, community-building power. It is a great mystery that the good and the useful ultimately converge. It does not follow that one could or should institute Christianity, the doctrine of the good, on the ground that it is socially useful. Such abuse would immediately destroy its character of goodness and thereby also its usefulness. Only the good which is willed on the ground that it is good can prove useful. But can we live, socially and personally, without "sympathy"?

Some Remarks About the Economic Interpretation of History

The economic interpretation of history is much in use in this country among popular writers, particularly in the form that we should, as we surely must sooner or later, adjust our lives to changing economic and technological conditions; it is those which condition our lives. Writers and readers for the most part overlook the fact that the strict economic interpretation of history has long since been given up by the legitimate heirs to it, the Russian communists. (We do not discuss here the philosophical reasons which make the doctrine untenable.)

The Russians have given it up not only in practice but in theory as well. They rightly claim that their changed version is loyal to Marxism, although they overrate, and certainly overemphasize, the identity. The doctrine of a more or less automatic development toward socialism does not leave much room for governmental action to promote it; certainly it does not leave sufficient room for the enormous activity of the Soviet government in a backward country like Russia. "Dialectical Materialism," hence, has already for twenty years been interpreted to mean the freedom and responsibility of the socialist government in building socialism. The economic interpretation is preserved in that history is conceived as moving toward socialist institutions and through them to final harmony and peace. But the economic interpretation is relegated, as it were, to the second rank in that

it is political initiative which creates those economic institutions. The doctrine of the freedom of the socialist government and the doctrine of infallible salvation by those institutions are combined. The combination transforms the economic interpretation of history into a political interpretation, in which the final salvation of mankind depends on the skill and ruthlessness of the socialist government in building those institutions. This is the philosophy behind communist policy today. Its merit is in recognizing in history the part of creativeness and responsibility, which did not fare well at the hands of the original version. Its sinister aspect is in the one-track way to a fixed goal; no error and no abuse are considered possible.

* * *

In order to fit the facts into the rigid mould of their theory, the Russians resort to such patent nonsense as, for example, saying that the Roman Catholic Church is the largest capitalist enterprise in the world. They have to do that if they are to uphold the theory which reduces everything in present-day history to the certainly predominant issue between capitalist and socialist economic forms. In our language we can simply say that the Roman Catholic Church is a power among the powers of the present world, where the substance of power may be either political-military or economic or spiritual. That spiritual power is power, and that no power is quite without a spiritual aspect, is ignored by pure idealism, which harps, with Lord Acton, on the inevitable corruption by power and believes that man can be pure spirit, exempt from corruption. To set this right is the merit of materialism. Its error is to deny the existence of autonomous spiritual life.

* * *

Recent events have conspicuously refuted the economic interpretation of history, although they have just as conspicuously emphasized the enormous importance of things economic in history. If there were only economic issues, the political groupings that seem to shape themselves before our eyes all over Europe would be senseless. In France and Italy notably, there is an overwhelming majority of the people and their parliamentary representatives for a large measure of socialization. The consensus of opinion among the advocates of such a policy is accentuated by the remarkable moderation on social and economic issues of the communist parties in those countries. The strict exemption of agriculture and small business from the orthodox Marxian program of total socialization, reduces the applicability of the program to the limited sector of big business. What differences remain between the economic and social policies of the left-wing parties do not seem to exceed the natural difference in temperaments between "a little liberal" and "a little conservative." Yet the division between the left-wing parties is deep and well-marked because there are, beside the economic issue, the political and spiritual issues, on which they are divided. In the economic sphere, the issue is between capitalism and socialism, and they are all more or less on one side. In the political-constitutional sphere, the issue is between checks on governmental power and concentration of power; here the socialists and the Catholics are on one side, the communists on the other, although this is partly disguised where they form a minority and are interested in preventing any strong action being taken by the state in order to keep it weak and profit by it. In the spiritual

sphere, which includes the organization of education, the split is between the socialist and communist atheists, who believe in the scientific conception of man and history, and the Catholics, who insist on a Christian education to integrate the community, thereby naturally raising the specter of clericalism. What remains of the economic interpretation?

Germany

The sensational rise in the international position of Germany as announced in the speeches of Molotov and Byrnes is one of the most serious symptoms of the international crisis.

An improvement in the economic position of Germany certainly was long overdue. We cannot responsibly claim to govern a people and at the same time leave it to starvation, least of all if we declare it to be our mission to educate that people to democracy. Germany's soil had been tilled by slave laborers from foreign lands, and as their crops shrank she was supplied with the fat taken from foreign lands. The collapse ended that and naturally brought famine. But in addition eight or ten million people, Nazis and anti-Nazis indiscriminately, were driven out of the Eastern provinces annexed to Russia and Poland, and the survivors of the uncounted deaths, crimes, and suicides on the high roads were squeezed into the rest of Germany, while at the same time the grains of those agrarian surplus provinces were shipped eastward. One may condone this in view of the ravages which the German armies had wrought in Russia and Poland; but it certainly runs counter to the letter and spirit of the Potsdam agreement, which stated that Germany should be administered by the occupying powers as an economic unit, with the traditional exchange of Eastern agrarian surpluses and Western industrial products as its center; hence the terrible food situation in the American zone and still more in the most highly industrialized British zone including Hamburg and the Ruhr. One cannot be sure that the Russians did not intend this by-effect of their policy; in any case they harped on the difference in the food supplies between East and West.

But the enormous destructions of German industry, which had been the main objective of our air war, further aggravated the situation, of course. The aim of the American policy as crystallized in the Morgenthau plan was even to continue this destruction and reduce Germany to an agrarian-pastoral life. Whatever the personal motives of the author of the plan, the economic interests which it spectacularly served were those of American heavy industry in getting rid of its strongest competitor in the world market. The British opposed this policy; they want to preserve and build up German industry again because they expect to dominate it. Theirs is a colonial rather than a competitive interest. The Russians too showed a positive interest in German industry; they hoped it would produce reparations for them, and they would control it. The French however were suspicious and apprehensive lest the physical preservation of German industry, that is, of the German war potential, make Germany militarily strong again as soon as general conditions changed. They therefore demanded that the Ruhr district be separated from the Reich politically and put under international control, in which they themselves would have a strong hand.

The French were right. The problem is a very simple one and was very simply stated and solved by Hans Simons (in *Christianity and Crisis)* as early as 1942. Without German industry the factories, homes, railroads, and bridges of Europe cannot be rebuilt; and today the Belgians and Dutch are complaining that to live next to a poor-house keeps them poor too. On the other hand, the argument runs, Germany's neighbors and victims, the French, Czechs, and Poles, would never permit German industry, that is, the German war potential, to remain in German hands; hence the logical solution was to internationalize the Ruhr, not only economically but politically as well. There is little reason to doubt that the Ruhr miners would have accepted such a privileged position, had they been offered it immediately upon the end of hostilities. This was substantially the program of the French when they had satisfied themselves that they could not annex the Ruhr outright.

The program failed just because it was designed to keep the Germans militarily weak. Both Molotov and Byrnes now want them militarily strong because both hope to win them over as allies in a possible conflict between East and West. There is no doubt that the Russians started the reversal, first by throwing the Communist party wide open to the ex-Nazis when the socialist party barred them, later by force in their zone, under the pressure of the reopened concentration camps, and finally by pressing in the Western zones for a merger of the Communist and Socialist parties and making the Unity party the spokesman for a strong Germany under Soviet protection. They even dropped more than one hint to suggest that they might return to Germany the eastern provinces given to Poland; Poland is so much weaker than Germany potentially is. There is little that the Americans could do but adopt the analogous program for ourselves. But then it must be conceded that the revival of German nationalism and militarism by its conquerors is in the logic of the situation, given the conflict of interests between the two great powers, which is not exclusively of Russian making. The development had been confidently predicted by the Nazis. One wonders now what room is left for the hoped-for German democracy if the two great powers have an interest in courting German nationalism.

No humanitarian purpose was strong enough for the Allies to give the Germans a decent economic chance, although the British were on the way to such a policy. The displaced persons, who represent no power with which one could ally oneself, are kept for the second year after the armistice in their dreary camps, where they had experienced torture and witnessed the murder of their comrades. One is not interested in them. When they escape from those camps, they are illegal immigrants wherever they go and are put behind barbed wire. The Germans, contrariwise, still have almost twice the manpower of France and three times that of Poland; they are a potential military power. Hence the security of France and her neighbors is sacrificed by the big powers to their competition for Germany's favor. It is good that the Germans shall get enough to eat. But the way they get it makes us even sadder than has their starvation; their starving reflected a sad past, but their revival forbodes a sinister future.

E. H.

DEMOCRACY AND THE NATURE OF MAN

By WILL HERBERG

> [The Constitution] is the work of men who believed in original sin and were resolved to leave open for transgressors no door which they could possibly shut.—*James Bryce* [1]

> In questions of power . . . let no more be heard of confidence in man but bind him down from mischief by the chains of the Constitution. . . . Free government is founded in jealousy, not in confidence.—*Thomas Jefferson* [2]

"It is surely true that there exists now, in all the world, an international of well-intentioned men and women," Stephen Spender concludes toward the end of a revealing account of his impressions of a trip to Germany.[3] "Their conscious or unconscious faith is Christianity, and probably the most serious division of opinion between these people of good will is as to whether they regard human nature as more good than bad or as more bad than good."

Spender's formulation of the question is rather imprecise but the question itself is undoubtedly crucial in all serious thinking about the nature and destiny of man. It is certainly crucial in any attempt to understand the nature of democracy and to assess its relevance to human life in society.

Democracy has customarily been expounded and validated, particularly among social radicals, in terms of a conception of human nature shallow and unrealistic at best and rendered utterly untenable by the experience of recent decades. Democracy must be grounded in a more profound and realistic view of human nature if it is to make good its claim to serious intellectual status and to be capable of resisting the cynical relativism upon which totalitarianism depends to corrode the moral foundations of civilization. In the following paragraphs I want to present the outlines of a theory of democracy that strives to take into account the complex realities of life and thus to qualify itself to deal with the urgent problems of our time. And significantly, it will be found that this reconstruction of democratic philosophy brings it closer to the historical tradition out of which, in our part of the world at least, it has grown—I mean the tradition of Anglo-American constitutionalism rooted in the Puritanism of the seventeenth century and the liberalism of the eighteenth.

Ambivalence of Human Nature

The conception of democracy I am going to develop rests on a view of the nature of man which is essentially theological though it may perhaps be capable of restatement in more positivistic terms. It avoids oversimplification by refusing to take either the optimistic or the pessimistic position as the final and complete truth. It does not stake everything on faith in human nature or on trust in the essential virtue of the "common

[1] James Bryce, *The American Commonwealth*, Chap. XXVI, sect. viii.
[2] Thomas Jefferson, *Kentucky Resolutions* (1798).
[3] Stephen Spender, "Rhineland Journal," *Horizon*, December 1945.

man." Nor, on the other hand, does it regard the mass of men as hopeless incompetents or incorrigible scoundrels. It is a view that is at once more complex and more ambiguous than either simple optimism or simple pessimism, as indeed it must be if it is to do justice to the antithetical aspects of man's nature, to its grandeur and its misery, to its potentialities and its limitations.

The final truth about the nature of man is that it is in the last analysis ambivalent. It is not originally either good or evil or neutrally capable of becoming either; it is *both* good *and* evil. It is not either rational or irrational, but both. The two aspects of human nature require equal and parallel stress if fatal oversimplification is to be avoided.

1. Man is undeniably part of nature and always remains embedded within it. But quite as undeniably he transcends nature by virtue of his spirit, by virtue of his reason, his imagination and his moral freedom. Russell has expressed man's paradoxical status in words of unforgettable poignancy: [4]

> A strange mystery it is that nature, omnipotent but blind, has brought forth at last a child, subject still to her power but gifted with sight, with knowledge of good and evil, with the capacity of judging all the works of his unthinking mother. . . . Man is yet free, during his brief years to examine, to criticize, to know and in imagination to create. To him alone, in the world with which he is acquainted, this freedom belongs and in this lies his superiority to the resistless forces that control his outer life.

All of the great religious and ethical traditions of our civilization recognize man's unique spiritual status in the world of nature. Theology speaks of him as created in the "image of God," as a being in comparison with whom all of the non-human world is as nothing in worth. Philosophy exalts him as absolute end in a world of means. "Every man," in Kant's classical words,[5] "is to be respected as an absolute end in himself and it is a crime against the dignity that belongs to him as man to use him as a mere means to some external purpose." This emphasis on the high dignity of man and his absolute worth as a person is the first principle of democracy: it is the principle of personalism.

The principle, it should be noted, is at once exclusive and universalistic. It implies that *only* individual human beings are absolute ends; all things else, including all social institutions without exception, are in the final analysis merely means and can be justified only as such. But the principle also implies that *all* human beings are each individually absolute ends and are therefore equal as ends. Empirical inequalities that characterize human beings vanish as irrelevant. In this ideal Kingdom of Ends, all men are indeed equal and all of equal worth.

The position here taken—which may be described as universalistic personalism—is obviously religious in nature: it is essentially equivalent to the Judaeo-Christian teaching of the Fatherhood of God and the Brotherhood of Man. It is in its nature incapable of empirical proof or disproof. If it is to be affirmed at all, it must be affirmed as an article of faith.

2. But man, theology teaches us, is not simply the "image of God"; he is

[4] Bertrand Russell, "A Free Man's Worship," *Mysticism and Logic*, p. 48.

[5] Immanuel Kant, *Fundamental Principles of the Metaphysics of Morals*, Sect. II.

the *"defaced* image of God"—defaced by sin.

I know that the very mention of sin is offensive to the modern mind, or what was the modern mind until yesterday. Sin is an exploded superstition, we have been assured again and again by modernists of all varieties, and it is sheer obscurantism to introduce the notion into the consideration of human affairs. It would be interesting to know how much of this emotional repugnance is due to the unfortunate misuse of the term in certain types of religious exhortation and how much of it is due to the attempt of modern man to evade ultimate responsibility. At any rate, we can no longer do without the concept of sin or its equivalent if we are serious about trying to understand the nature of man. A mere reading of Freud would make us suspect this fact even if the entire experience of the twentieth century had not driven it home with tragic emphasis. So good a naturalist and "humanist" as E. A. Burtt has openly confessed as much in two significant articles in recent numbers of *The Humanist*.[6] Concludes Professor Burtt:

> The reader who has followed my argument thus far will be prepared to see some very profound truths in the theological theory of sin which do not at all depend on the antiquated context and distorted form in which they have traditionally been presented.

The notion of human sinfulness is not, as Stephen Spender's words quoted above would seem to imply, the belief that evil outweighs good in human nature. Rather is it the conviction, to use Professor Burtt's words, that "there is in man a demonic, rebellious, essentially evil force"—that human nature possesses, originally and irreducibly, a destructive element of evil and unreason side by side with the good and the rational within it. Human nature is inescapably ambivalent.

The sinfulness of man, theology further teaches us, is rooted in his egotism and self-centeredness. If the categorical imperative of the moral life is to treat all men as equally worthy absolute ends (that is, to love one's neighbor as one's self), then obviously human egotism and self-centeredness, the universal tendency to exalt the self and subject others to its will, is the radical violation of the moral law and hence the source of all moral evil in individual and social life. It is no accident that pride is traditionally held to be the first of the seven deadly sins; the lust for power is but the prideful self-assertion of the ego in its social dimension.

Through his reason and his moral will, man achieves his high dignity as a person. But through his egotism and self-centeredness his will is corrupted, his reason clouded and his spiritual freedom converted into a potentiality for evil. Thus the good and the evil in man are not merely coexistent; they are inextricably combined and made to serve each other's purposes. Those who believe that good is good and evil evil and never the twain shall meet have no inkling of the insidious ways in which all motives, even the basest, are idealized and all ideals, even the purest, are in fact compounded with the self-interest of those who promote them.

This analysis of the nature of man has immediate social relevance. Man, as we have seen, possesses, through his idealism

[6] E. A. Burtt, "Does Humanism Understand Man?", *The Humanist,* Autumn 1945; "Humanism and the Doctrine of Sin," *The Humanist,* Winter 1946.

and imagination, the capacity to transcend self and aspire to impartial justice: *this makes social order possible.* But man's capacity for self-transcendence is necessarily limited by the irreducible egotism of his nature: *this makes democracy necessary.*[7] Both aspects are indispensable to any tenable theory of democracy: one as a protection against the pessimistic cynicism that leads to tyranny; the other against the optimistic utopianism that leads to anarchy.

Two Types of Oversimplification

Particularly since Rousseau, belief in democracy has been associated with confidence in the natural goodness of man. Human beings are by nature rational and virtuous, we are assured, but they have been corrupted by evil institutions, by the machinations of ambitious rulers, cunning priests and greedy exploiters. Free them of these, educate, enlighten and emancipate them, and their natural reason and virtue will reassert themselves. Given the opportunity, men will show that they can govern themselves in peace and wisdom. Democracy is at once the medium of emancipation and the final state of social harmony.

In one form or another, this naive optimism has permeated the democratic philosophy of the past two centuries. "Liberal" versions of Christianity, Rousseau's romanticism, the rationalism of the Encyclopedists and the utilitarians, Dewey's gospel of social intelligence, even the sophisticated millenarianism of the Marxists, are at bottom variant forms of an attitude which Professor Burtt has well characterized as a "deceitful illusion."

It is a deceitful illusion because it is manifestly untrue to the facts of life, because it fails to answer the critical question of how evil institutions could possibly have arisen if man is really good, but above all because it tends to betray one into a false security in a situation where only the utmost vigilance can promise safety. Democracy becomes, on this view, something very easy to achieve and once achieved still easier to maintain.

But by the same token, democracy becomes hardly necessary. Either anarchy or absolutism might be defended with equal plausibility. If the evil in men manifesting itself in social conflict is merely peripheral and accidental, merely the consequence of ignorance, obsolete institutions or "cultural lag," then one may with reason look forward in the not too distant future to a state of uncoerced harmony in which "all need for force will vanish since people will grow accustomed to observing the elementary conditions of social existence without force and without subjection." [8] Indeed, if democracy depends on the virtue of the "common man" for its realization and justification, then it is hardly possible as long as men continue in their benighted state and hardly necessary once they are truly enlightened.[9] Anarchism, not democracy, is the logic of the doctrine of the natural goodness of man.

But the same logic may be turned to very different purposes, to validate absolutism whether of a despot or a majority. That natural goodness which is supposed

[7] Cp. Reinhold Niebuhr, *The Children of Light and the Children of Darkness,* especially the foreword and Chaps. I and II.

[8] V. I. Lenin, *State and Revolution,* Chap. IV, sect. 6. Almost identical sentiments were expressed by William Godwin (*Political Justice,* Book viii, Chap. IX).

[9] This is precisely Engels' argument, as Lenin points out in *State and Revolution,* Chap. IV, sects. 3 and 6.

to emerge once man sloughs off the encumbrance of ignorance and vicious institutions may very well permit an enlightened ruler to be the true guardian of the welfare and interests of his subjects. Hobbes, whose pessimism had curious lapses, used this alleged identity of interest to justify absolute monarchy, Rousseau used it to justify the despotism of the "general will," and more than one apologist has used it to justify the Stalinist regime in Russia.[10] Their line of argument cannot be effectively met, at least not on the theoretical plane, as long as perfect rationality and goodness are held to constitute the essential nature of man and to be capable of realization or very close approximation in actual life.

Historically, as the French and Russian revolutions bear witness, the optimistic conception of human nature is closely associated with revolutionary terror. Robespierre and Lenin were both confirmed believers in the natural goodness of man. Each looked upon his revolutionary utopia as no more than an obviously reasonable, thoroughly practicable program bound to commend itself to all right-minded men. Opposition, where not the result simply of misunderstanding, must be due to incorrigible benightedness, to corruption by the old institutions beyond hope of repair. The only remedy is the merciless excision of the rotten, worthless flesh to permit the healthy growth of the newly emerging organism: revolutionary terror is the proper instrument for this wholesome "surgical operation." In this way, the utopian revolutionary manages to make his idealistic theory serve to justify his bitter resentment at the shattering of his utopian dreams on the hard rock of human recalcitrance. Rosa Luxemburg long ago warned that the revolutionary who "enters the arena with naive illusions" will be driven to "resort to bloody revenge when disillusionment comes." [11]

If the notion of the essential goodness of man makes democracy unnecessary, the doctrine of his utter depravity would seem to make it impossible.

In Judaeo-Christian thought, the coercive state is traditionally regarded as at once the outcome, the punishment and the remedy for sin, made necessary by human sinfulness yet serving to protect society from its worst consequences in social life, the ruinous anarchy of irreconcilable conflict. Seizing upon this profoundly true insight, thoroughgoing pessimists such as Luther and Hobbes elaborated a political philosophy which saw in the secular order simply the realm of evil and assigned to the state the sole function of repression. Terrified at the destructive possibilities of human sinfulness, they found the only hope of social security, the only alternative to chaos, in an iron-clad regime that would keep the inordinate egotism of human beings under strict control. The slightest relaxation of absolutism, in the view of these thinkers, would throw society into the abyss of anarchy at the brink of which it constantly stands.

[10] Hobbes: "In monarchy, the private interest (of the sovereign) is the same as the public interest." (*Leviathan,* Chap. XIX.)

Rousseau: "Now the sovereign, being formed only of the individuals that compose it, neither has nor can have any interest contrary to theirs; consequently the sovereign power need give no guarantee to its subjects." (*The Social Contract,* Book I, Chap. VII.)

For Stalinist apologists, see Sidney and Beatrice Webb, *Soviet Communism,* particularly Vol. II, Chap. VIII.

[11] Rosa Luxemburg, *Program Manifesto of the Spartacus League,* January 1919.

But fear may be as delusive as hope and the philosophers of unrelieved pessimism fall into a fatal error even in terms of their own system. If human nature is so utterly depraved that nothing but ruthless force from above can preserve society from self-destruction, then what about the absolute ruler to whom the function of coercion is entrusted? He too is presumably human, hence totally depraved and bound to use his position of power to aggrandize himself at the expense of his subjects, thus in his turn destroying the basis of social order. And this holds true whether the absolute sovereign is an individual, an aristocratic elite or the "people." Hobbes's strange attempt to discover a community of interest between ruler and subjects is utterly out of line with his system. Luther does not seem to make even so much of an effort to achieve consistency. Because the doctrine of utter depravity denies man any capacity to transcend self, it renders not only democracy but even society ultimately impossible.

An adequate philosophy of democracy cannot be grounded in either an oversimplified optimism or an oversimplified pessimism. It must seek a basis in a view of human nature more profound and many-sided, one that, as I have noted, is capable of doing justice both to man's potentialities and to his limitations, both to his undoubted capacities for moral and intellectual achievement and to the inevitable deformation of his reason and will through inordinate self-love. There is no escape from the radical ambivalence of human nature.

Ambivalence in the Social Order

The ambivalence of human nature is paralleled by a like ambivalence in social organization. "There are convincing arguments," John Dewey tells us in a statement curiously out of line with his general philosophy,[12] "that individuals can be free only in connection with large-scale organizations and that such organizations are limitations on freedom." This dictum is of course above all true of that vast political structure known as the state. Social organization imperils freedom because it necessarily entails bureaucracy and coercion. Perfectly uncoerced harmony is impossible in human society; the residual evil in human nature, which, as we have seen, any realistic philosophy must recognize, makes it ultimately necessary for power to be exerted at some point in order to preserve society from the centrifugal forces of individual and group self-interest.[13]

The crucial point in our problem is therefore the question of power—its utilization and control.[14] The exercise of power by some men over others is implied in the very existence of society, yet power possesses its own expansive dynamic. Those who possess power will seek to preserve, perpetuate, enlarge and exploit it in the interests of individual or collective self-aggrandizement. This conclusion emerges directly from our view of human nature and is the incontrovertible testimony of all history and experience. How can power be utilized, as it must, to preserve the social order from the chaos of anarchy, and yet be prevented from running wild and falling

[12] John Dewey, *Freedom and Culture*, p. 67.

[13] "In each pursuit and in each institution—since all activities become in time integrated into institutions—the element of authority and its hierarchical delegation are indispensable. Discipline and some means of enforcing this submission are essential to authority." (Bronislaw Malinowsky, *Freedom and Civilization*, p. 244.)

[14] I have discussed the moral aspects of the question in "The Ethics of Power," *Jewish Frontier*, March 1945.

into the tyranny of absolutism? This is the problem that democracy claims it and it alone can solve.

If there is any truth at all in the view of human nature outlined in these paragraphs, it should be clear that power cannot be tamed simply by enlarging the wisdom or fortifying the virtue of the holders of power, for there is no wisdom so broad or virtue so strong that it can escape the corruption of self-interest. Trust in the intelligence or self-restraint of the wielders of power is folly, as Jefferson points out in the remark I have chosen as a part of the epigraph of this article. Ultimately, there is only one way in which power can be rendered safe and that is by diffusing it widely through society, thus making it possible to pit power against power and block abuse in one direction by checks and balances in another. What results is not impotence or paralysis, as the impatient advocates of authoritarianism tell us, but a genuine mobilization of the resources of society for purposes sanctioned by broad agreement and effected with a minimum of coercion and regimentation.

That is what democracy is: *an institutional system capable of sustaining and fostering social organization through the necessary use of power while guarding against its dangers and excesses at the hands of tyrannical rulers, oligarchical minorities and despotic majorities alike.* Democracy is predicated on the conviction, so mercilessly inculcated by our experience of human nature and history, that no man possesses sufficient imagination, wisdom or goodness to make him a safe guardian of the interests of others, that no man is good enough or wise enough to be entrusted with absolute or irresponsible power over his fellow-men. Under democracy, both rulers and masses are restrained and controlled for the security of the people against the rulers on the one hand, and of minorities and individuals against both rulers and people on the other. *Democracy, in short, is the institutionalization of permanent resistance to human sinfulness in politics,* which, as we have seen, manifests itself primarily in the egotistic self-assertion of power. So thoroughly aware is democracy at its best of the inevitable moral dubiousness of all government, that it embodies the principle of resistance to government in the very structure of government itself.

This conception of democracy as an institutional system for the control of power in the interests of freedom has immediate relevance for all spheres of social life. The familiar institutional devices of political democracy—such as majority rule, representative parliamentary government, freedom of political activity; pluralism, decentralization and the devolution of power; protection of the essential human rights of individuals and minorities—gain significance in terms of this conception. And the same is true of economic democracy, which is surely the substance of socialism. For economic democracy is not mere economic security, however important economic security may be as a condition for the pursuit of the good life. Nor is it economic collectivism, however necessary some form of collectivism may be for the realization of freedom in the modern world. Economic democracy means democracy in the sphere of economics, the diffusion and control of economic power in the interests of freedom. It therefore implies the effective participation of the members of the community, producers and consumers alike,

in the determination of the course, conditions and purposes of economic life. This I take to be the common element in all programs of economic reform in the interests of social justice.

Indeed, it seems to me that the conception of democracy I have here outlined is essentially that from which advocates of social justice have generally criticized the existing social order. The ground of such criticism has usually been that our social order permits the inordinate concentration of political and economic power in the hands of a few and thus leads to the virtual enslavement of the mass of men. Therefore, it must be made to give way to another in which power will be more equally distributed and thus in effect drastically reduced, perhaps even, as the utopians hope, completely abolished.

Strangely enough, this conception of democracy falls in not only with the approach of economic radicalism but also with what is usually taken to be its very antithesis, the political philosophy of the Founding Fathers of the American republic. My point is that this antithesis is largely unreal. The Founding Fathers, of course, differed very widely among themselves but all—Jefferson, Madison, Adams, even Hamilton—agreed that political freedom meant the control of power through institutions preventing undue concentration and irresponsible absolutism in whatever direction. They all—even Jefferson, for all his speculative faith in human nature—had a profound sense of the corrupting effects of excessive power on rulers and ruled alike, and this suspicion or "jealousy" of power, as Jefferson termed it, they traced to the universal tendency of human nature to abuse power by making it the instrument of self-interest. This attitude applied to the facts of present-day economic life yields a pluralistic socialism as the groundwork of a better and freer society.

I am not trying to establish this connection out of patriotic piety or out of a desire to be paradoxical. I believe there is a profound consideration involved. It is because they all had a realistic understanding of human nature, because they all "believed in original sin," as Lord Bryce puts it in the passage quoted in the epigraph, that the Founding Fathers "were determined to leave open" to absolutism and irresponsible power "no door which they could possibly shut." Is it altogether fantastic to associate the pluralistic constitutionalism of the Anglo-American democratic tradition on the one hand, and the curious mixture of absolutism and anarchism that constitutes the Continental variety on the other, with the somber theological realism that forms the background of the one and the sentimental Rousseauism that was the inspiration of the other?

THE POLITICAL SITUATION IN FRANCE

By FRANCIS A. HENSON *

The struggle throughout Europe today is between communism and a social democratic way of life, the latter defined in a very broad non-totalitarian manner. Nowhere else in Europe is this struggle taking place in such a highly developed way (the way one could imagine it taking place in the United States the day after tomorrow) as it is in France. For this reason and because Europe will certainly go Communist if and when France goes Communist, what happens here is of crucial importance for the world and the proper outcome of the fierce political battle is of utmost interest to everyone in the States who appreciates the values inherent in our democratic form of government.

Defining terms, it is obvious that the writer includes Georges Bidault and many MRP members (that is members of the Mouvement Républicain Populaire) as well as the official Socialist Party of Léon Blum and André Philip in the category of those favoring "a social democratic way of life." Furthermore, in mentioning names with these parties one qualifies the definition so that it means literally all men in these parties who are willing to admit that they may have to combine in the struggle for socialism and against Communism, as I have reason to believe, the leaders of the two major democratic parties, I have mentioned, would be willing to combine and may combine in a specific political campaign within the next twelve months. One of the main problems, and an almost insuperable one, is the church school question, which for MRP Catholics is a question on which they say they cannot compromise and on which the nonclerical are just as firm. However, most of them admit that the threat of Communism is much greater than any of their differences and that if they were convinced that Communism would triumph in France in the face of their political divisions, they would unite to resist it. On a positive program, they are much more in agreement than most Americans realize. The only positive program, on which the great majority of Frenchmen agree, is a generally socialist one, differing as they do in their interpretations of its meaning. The important consideration, in this respect, is that the old chaotic multi-party disease of French politics seems to have been cured; there are only three parties which represent the great majority of French people and the tendency is toward a realignment into two major political tendencies. Herriot's Radical Socialist

* Just before going to press the following footnote was received from the author of this article: "Since this article was written, the convention of the Socialist Party has been held; there was sharp difference of opinion but no split. In general, however, what has been written in the article still holds true. A gain can be registered in the greater clarity within the SFIO on the Communist Party issue. Furthermore, whatever has been reported in the States, all who know Guy Mollet declare that he is very able and not a Communist Party stooge, as some French papers have implied. He is the new Secretary General of the Party. Andre Philip has come out of this convention as one of the most influential of the intellectual leaders of the party and could have been secretary general, if he had wanted the job."

Party is still an intellectual influence but it is much less politically potent than the British Liberal Party. The PRL (the Parti Républicain de la Liberté) was formed at the last elections by very right wing Catholics, with the hope of drawing strength from the MRP; it failed miserably.

As for the SFIO, the official socialist party of France, with which most of us are best acquainted and in which we are most interested because it represents the viewpoint of the readers of CHRISTIANITY AND SOCIETY, it is in the process of recovering from a policy of shilly-shallying on the question of a united front with the Communists; what happened to it in the May referendum on the Constitution and the June elections of another provisional government proves what always happens to socialist parties which play the united front game, according to Commonist rules, the only rules the Communists use. This is the reason, earlier in the article, I spoke of the SFIO of Blum and Philip; these men were always somewhat unhappy about working closely with the Communists and it is doubtful if they would ever approve of it again. There is a small but important section of the SFIO leadership which continues to favor closer collaboration with the Communists and eventually in a show down would go with the Communists; for example if the Socialist party splits. This kind of "splitting" seems to be an inevitable tendency of the international socialist movement (as it was of Protestantism), as people within it make up their mind as to what kind of socialism they really favor. Friends of Daniel Mayer, secretary of the SFIO, have informed me that he would definitely take sides against the Communists if necessary; there are others who think that he would go with the Communists. At the present time, he is working day and night to keep the party united.

On no other French political question are Americans more confused, in my judgment, than on the question of the standing of Charles De Gaulle. The French people of the right and the great middle classes (and many of the left) respect him, but only a few would vote for him for President. I have made inquiries, methodically, since arriving in France and I have not met one Frenchman (even among PRL members) who said he would vote for De Gaulle. He seems to have impressed his closest political friends with his essential lack of political reasonableness and patience; they do not speak of his dictatorial tendencies, although all of the left, including the MRP, have hinted at this danger from time to time. At the present time, the only possibility of the return of De Gaulle would be in order to head a military movement against an attempted Communist coup d'etat and I have heard General Leclerc's name mentioned much more frequently to play this role. This would, by the logic of politics, represent French fascism, of course.

Having made this analysis of De Gaulle's position, I warn readers to take my observations on France (and those of every other writer) with a grain of salt; there is no country, with which I am acquainted, about which it is less safe to make predictions. I remind everyone to remember the manner in which the best thinkers, from right to left and all so-called disinterested observers abroad as well as in France, were wrong in thinking that the Constitution would win in the May referendum. In retrospect, it is now easy to see that the

Communists over-reached themselves just before the referendum with their slogan of "Thorez au Pouvoir"; I can remember thinking at the impressive May Day parade, in which the Communists chanted this slogan, that it might scare the daylights out of even socialists but, if I had been writing a daily column, I do not think I would have guessed that it would help defeat the Communist-Socialist supported Constitution. Literally, the whole world believed otherwise. And the whole world was wrong; that grand instinct for liberty of the French worker as well as the bourgeoisie, which some would call fickleness, made its historical mark that day.

Since the memorable day, the Communist Party has lost much support from the French people in general, and a certain amount of demoralization has occurred within the party, because of two other developments. First there was Molotov's speech at the meeting of the Big Four, taking sides with the German party on the Ruhr and Saar question (the French Communists had had the most nationalistic slogans of all French parties on this question). Secondly, the French Communist Party found itself isolated in the Chamber of Deputies in its attempt to invalidate the elections of such pro-appeasement (of the Nazis, of course!) Frenchmen as Daladier and Reynaud; the Socialist and most MRP speakers made it quite clear before voting against invalidation that they had no love for Daladier and Reynaud but did not consider that the Chamber had any legal right to tell a constituency for whom it could or could not vote, a principle which is at the very heart of a constitutional and democratic country. The speeches the Communist deputies made during these bitter discussions high-lighted what they had in mind when they advocated their Constitution for a strongly centralized and party-dominated French State, which had been up for ratification in May.

Now, it is predicted that the Constitutional Commission, under the chairmanship of André Philip, will present to the country before November a Constitution combining the best features of the British and American systems and that it will be adopted by a great majority of the French voters.

It would seem, therefore, that since May 5th, France has moved away from the danger of totalitarianism, but this is only true on the political front. The battle has been far from won, in a general way; certainly it has not been won on the economic front. The CGT (Confédération Général des Travailleurs), the massive industries-wide industrial and trade union movement is completely Communist-dominated. The six non-Communist members of the Executive Board of thirteen led by Pierre Neumeyer and Robert Botherau admit themselves that they could not have been elected if the Communist faction had waged an all-out fight against them. And all observers agree that the old man, Jouhaux, the president, while not a Communist himself is a prisoner of them and is unwilling to be considered an oppositionist, knowing that if he were he would not have been re-elected. This means that the CGT could wreck French economy, if the Communist Party decided such a tactic were necessary. For the present, the Communists are the most energetic advocates of French industrial recovery, keeping wages related to prices, no strikes and a general policy of moderation. They are acting as a

party in power and the left Socialists, Trotskysts and anarchists find themselves, as the militants, constantly fighting Communist leaders of their unions, who insist that the workers should not rock the boat. This also means that the future of the internal situation in France, for the few months immediately ahead, is to be judged more by watching developments at the Peace Conference and at UNO sessions and in relations between France and the U.S.S.R., internationally, than in careful scrutiny of living conditions of the workers in France herself. The unhealthy aspects of such a situation are clear and it is to be regretted that the socialists and non-communists in general are not doing more work in the unions and among agricultural workers because the battle will not be won simply at the polls.

I am glad to be able to report that some unofficial representatives from the United States such as Irving Brown of the American Federation of Labor are preaching this kind of sermon to any fellow unionists who will listen; his advice is having some effect. The problem is that there is such a great gap here between straight syndicalists (or as we would say pure and simple trade unionists) and socialist politicians who have developed out of the working class and who claim to represent the working class; this is accentuated by the fact that the SFIO is led by so many intellectuals and white-collar middle class people, as well as born proletarians.

Raymond Moley is probably correct when he urges the United States in its foreign policy not to intervene officially in France or elsewhere in favor of social democratic movements; he says such a policy always boomerangs and does not differ from Moscow's tactics. I imagine he would agree that much more intellectual support should be given by unofficial groups of Americans, especially by the labor movement. This, incidentally, is why the International Rescue and Relief Committee considers relief to be such a potent political weapon, if used properly. There is every evidence that if the French people, the Spanish people and other Europeans are given enough to eat and wear in this emergency, they will be able very soon to take care of themselves politically and culturally as well as physically. All of which adds up to this axiom which I keep repeating to myself: if we are defeated, it will not be because of the rightness or strength of the Totalitarians; it will be because of our own lack of a positive program and our divisions over less-essentials. I know now that we social democrats represent what the great majority of all people, in their deepest desires, want most from life.

OUR PROBLEM

By WILHELM STURMFELS

Comments on the article by Archibald MacLeish, "Humanism and Belief in Man." *

The subject discussed in Mr. Archibald MacLeish's article "Humanism and Belief in Man" is one that demands the attention of us Germans too. There can be no question that the two great problems which according to Mr. MacLeish, must be resolved if the world is not to destroy itself "the question of the right government of the world and the question of the right education of its citizens" are as much a matter of course for the German people as they are for the whole world. And yet, important as these problems are, for us Germans they are over-shadowed by a far more radical and elementary consideration. We are confronted with a situation in which mere reform is no longer possible. Ours is a truly revolutionary situation and we, therefore, face the necessity of a radical searching of our minds if we really want to know what we must do to establish, under the new conditions, the true foundations of our national life. Given this state of affairs, will Humanism be able to offer us any help worth considering?

I.

In a period like ours in which war is the characteristic mark and in which the struggle for power determines the rhythm of the life of nations to such an overwhelming degree that the individual seems to be doomed to complete insignificance, in such a period the question "What is man? What is his worth and his dignity?" becomes of paramount importance. It forces itself upon man and requires an answer from him if only to satisfy his natural anxiety for self-preservation. For the German people whose fate serves as a warning example of what blind obsession and idolatry of power will achieve in the end, this question has turned into one of its immediate spiritual survival, and that long before the military breakdown. For from the moment when the political and spiritual nihilism of the third Reich began its reign the links connecting the German people with the heritage of occidental culture were gradually loosened and cut off. By declaring "nordic man" to be an absolute in itself the dignity and importance attributed to man as man by the occident was denied. And not only theoretically but also practically as was demonstrated by the ghastly crimes and countless cruelties committed by the Nazis. The consequences were disastrous. The destruction of the political life was paralleled by an equal destruction of spiritual existence.

In the face of this total breakdown is there a possibility that Humanism can furnish the means by which we can reshape and renew our life intellectually and morally? The answer is no—and here we agree unreservedly with Mr. MacLeish, if by Humanism is meant a frame of mind which has completely lost

* The article by Mr. MacLeish was published in German translation, in the "Nordamerikanische Revue," the magazine of the occupation Army in Germany, for the Germans.

sight of the realities of life—a Humanism, as it were, in the abstract and for its own sake. But suppose even a Humanism that knows of our concrete and actual problem—can it decisively contribute to its solution? Can it restore belief in man and in humanity; can it re-awaken that sense of responsibility which is indispensable for any kind of education? It is doubtful whether such Humanism would really be capable of helping us Germans in the performance of our practical daily tasks. It is even more doubtful whether it would be capable of informing us with that strength and confidence, that readiness and resolution of which we are in so dire need for mastering the life that is ahead of us.

It is in this way that to us Germans the question of Humanism presents itself. We face a heap of rubble among which there is hardly a stone that can be put to use again. One must try to fathom the extent of hopelessness and despair by which the German people is engulfed if one is to understand their situation and the magnitude of the problem with which they are confronted. What do reforms and improvements avail a people in such a situation?

And yet, in spite of everything, one may ask: Is it really true that the German people stand inexorably before the abyss of "nothingness"? Is there no choice left but that revolutionary attitude which springs from blank despair? Has the cultural and spiritual heritage of the German people wantonly and definitively been destroyed and has it thus lost its power over, and its meaning for, our life? Has Nazism so completely destroyed our spiritual being that we have become a mere drifting mass without will of our own, an easy prey to collectivism and spiritual imbecility? Which is the true condition of the Germans today?

The German people have politically been a total failure for the past 10 years. Virtually all strata of the population have their share of responsibility for the political and moral ruin in which we find ourselves today. But it is also true that behind that Germany that was visible to everyone there existed another invisible Germany, however small, which remained immune to Nazi-influence. It maintained its connection with the true traditions of the German people. It is for this reason that we are justified in saying that Nazism, for all its destructive power, did not altogether succeed in cutting the German people from its historical moorings. And it is precisely at this point that political and moral reconstruction must begin. The most accurate planning of a democratic education or the knowledge of the best democratic government are of no avail unless one has a firm ground on which to stand; for only on a firm ground can all these things be built. Hence, our foremost duty is to re-gain this ground which will enable us to act again and make rational use of the strength at our command.

The fundamental importance of this consciousness of our historical existence must briefly be explained further. For us, in our unparalleled emergency, the problem before us cannot simply be "to reconstruct the human belief in man." Reconstruction is not enough. Our business is not merely to repair a damaged house. Ours is the business of rebuilding our house from its foundations and this can only be done by re-awakening the consciousness of our historical-spiritual origins. Therefore, our first and elementary task is to revive those forces which shaped and moulded us as a his-

torical people. We must become conscious again not only of the external historical conditions of our existence but also of the power of the spiritual tradition in which we are rooted. We must gain a clear conception of what we are historically and of the possibilities revealed to us by our history lest we build into a vacuum. We devise plans and conceive ideas, we organize life according to the necessities of the moment; but whenever we try to grasp and regulate life we do so as historical beings. In the final analysis what we do is determined by our being rooted in history. And thus a true concern for the future is, at the same time, a true concern for our past. As we are responsible for the future, so we are responsible for the true spiritual heritage which history has passed on to us and indeed in which we live and move and have our true being.

II.

Occidental history imposes an obligation and a responsibility on European man. Our conception of the value and dignity of man is based not only on an abstract belief in man; it is impressed on occidental man by his historic origin.

Two great historic events have shaped the character of occidental man: Christianity and antiquity; more precisely: the irruption of Christianity onto the world of occidental nations and the absorption of ancient culture have combined to prepare these nations, spiritually and politically, for their historic task. European history has its origin in this formative power of Christianity. And whenever Humanism succeeded in establishing itself as a real power in life it was due to this re-interpretation and absorption of Classicism by Christianity. We have no immediate relationship to the classical culture, that is, it is not given to us as an immediate experience. Only through Christianity did we grasp the spirit of antiquity and become aware of it as a moving power of life. And the important thing to realize is that Christianity not merely absorbed but transformed and transcended classical thought. In the new Christian humanum, addressing itself to all mankind, Christianity succeeded in breaking through the limitations of classical thought.

It is this Christian humanum that lives and works in us today. It has determined the life and destiny of the occidental nations, and influenced their decisions in the critical and great moments of their history. This must not be taken to mean that the history of occidental nations has always taken its course along these lines. But the idea of man and world with which Christianity inspired mankind has remained the final point of orientation for occidental history. What today we call humanity (humanitaet), in the positive and lasting meaning of the word, is but a secularized form of the Christian humanum, notwithstanding the fact that its philosophic foundations are not directly Christian. There is this difference, however, that while the idea of Humanity is essentially individualistic: a guiding principle, namely, for our individual responsibility in life, the Christian humanum is not. It is the foundation upon which the occidental nations organized their life and entered history. It is the soil in which the ideal of Humanism could grow. The Christian Humanum is the existential pre-supposition that made it possible for the peoples of the occident to fight out their conflicts

in a way not wholly disastrous to the European world as a whole.

It was Nazism which, for the first time in history, tried, and aimed at, a deliberate turning away from the occidental destiny of the European nations, a radical uprooting of the Christian Humanum from the intellectual and spiritual life of a people. Thereby it has abolished those conditions the absence of which makes it impossible for the conflicts among European nations to be resolved. We may find the specific historic causes which brought about this phenomenon. Seen as a whole, Nazism is the revolt of the demoniacal powers against the historical destiny of the German people. It deliberately, and with all means at its disposal, has wantonly undermined the foundation of the life of the German people and its connection with occidental history.

One thing is certain beyond doubt: We must not detach ourselves from our own foundation. We can abandon the historical calling imposed upon us by the occident only at the peril of nihilism and self-destruction.

III.

The Christian Humanum is, however, more than the awareness of the worth and dignity of man. It could not have been the moving power in history which it was if it had not been motivated by the love of man. Christian charity blended with the humanum is more than sympathy and compassion for the fellow-creature; it is the existential foundation of humanity. Love unites and by uniting it says yes to man. This affirmation of our fellow-men is the basis of our life and its laws in spite of all relapses. Be it clearly understood: not only rational purpose and interests unite men and make up the totality of life. Life does not have its origin merely in the intellect and it is not determined merely by purposes and interests. It may seem contrary to all our experience that life is ultimately sustained by the prime force of love. The man of facts and figures undoubtedly occupies a prominent part in the thinking of contemporary men. But how could life become possible as a totality transcending the merely factual without that inner readiness and devotion to the fellow-man so deeply inculcated in man since the Christianization of the European nations?

Life is not an invention of man to be handled like a machine. What we can organize are nothing but isolated areas of life, never life in its entirety. But today what we are concerned with is precisely the wholeness of life, the all-embracing concept of the humanum, the viewing of man from his origin. The foundations of our existence have not been created by free thought, by planning and organizing, but have been laid in and by our creation as human beings. We are, therefore, not concerned with the possibility of doing this or that. Despite all freedom of decision, we are bound by this idea of man underlying the history of mankind, and our task is to realize this idea.

The humanum transmitted to us by occidental history is more than a "belief" in man, which a new humanism wants to impress upon us. It is the foundation of our historical existence by which we ultimately live and work. In this sense respect for man which is inherent in the humanum comprises man as a whole in all his relations to life. This respect is a symbol of the overwhelming life-creating power of love.

Thus the Christian humanum as the inner principle of occidental existence has a twofold meaning: it means the respect for the worth and dignity of man grounded in the common calling of all men and nations, a respect inspired by the love of man. And it means this love of man finding its concrete and life-shaping expression in the respect for the worth and dignity of man.

IV.

After this unparalleled spiritual and moral breakdown, we Germans cannot but probe deeply and unflinchingly into what has happened and render an account of it. But we would sink into utter despair if we were no longer able to act according to our true historical mandate. For us there is more at stake than the re-ordering of the disjointed order of life, the reconstruction of the destroyed government machinery, the rebuilding of the economic structure. Our primary concern must be with the renascence of those basic powers which have formed the occident, with the restoration of the connections with our occidental destiny.

But that does not mean that we may neglect the problems of right government and responsible education. The energies poured into us from occidental history can become efficacious for us Germans only if they prove useful in the mastering of the immediate problems before us. These immediate tasks before us, the constructive planning and building must not be minimized nor brushed aside contemptuously. On the contrary! Critical thinking as well as responsible action of every individual as regards the immediately pressing questions are the urgent requirements of our situation. But we cannot meet these requirements without earnestly striving to revive that spiritual heritage by which we have been formed.

For us Germans a humanism which should "contribute to the solution of the two great moral, intellectual and political problems" would have to have a historical foundation and, at the same time, would have to prove fertile for the renewing and re-orientation of life. In other words: this humanism should be nourished by history on the one hand, and on the other, should open our eyes to the requirement of our life so as to be able to supply that personal strength necessary for the mastering of the future. Only in this sense can humanism become instrumental for the "renascence of man." Otherwise it would be a merely academic affair.

In thus referring to our historical existence as an occidental people I do not wish to suggest that it is the task of humanism to revive a past mode of life. The things to be done must be done in the framework of our given situation and by the powers available to us. Each individual at the place entrusted to him has to bear his share of responsibility for the sake of the common weal. But we cannot act responsibly unless, at the same time, we answer the call addressed to us as occidental men. The humanum which is at the foundation of occidental thought remains the point of orientation both for the history of the past and the history to come.

What the future of the nations and governments will look like we do not know. But we do know this: If we do not succeed in reviving the formative powers of occidental history, if we are unable to bring about the "Renascence

of Man" out of the spirit of the Christian Humanum demanded by history, if we do not—as a consequence of this—adhere to the solidarity of men and nations and do not organize our government and our educational system accordingly, all our efforts will be in vain. Failing all these things, we shall again be heading for the abyss so horribly shown to the nations by the example of the Third Reich in its denial of the occidental mandate of the German people.

OUR CONTRIBUTORS

Will Herberg, formerly editor of the independent socialist weekly, *Workers Age,* has been directing educational and research activities of a large New York labor union since 1941.

Francis A. Henson, after being demobilized from the U. S. Army, in late 1945, became the Director for the French Office of the International Rescue and Relief Committee. He now lives in Paris, where he spent many summers between World War I and World War II. He was one of the founders of CHRISTIANITY AND SOCIETY.

Wilhelm Sturmfels was Director of the Academy of Labor in the University of Frankfurt and visiting professor at the University before 1933; he has now resumed his position at the University.

Junius J. Martin is Rector of the Church of the Holy Apostles, St. Louis, Missouri.

THE COMMUNITY OF THE CHURCH

By JUNIUS J. MARTIN

Two contemporary practical problems have brought about the present interest in the Christian doctrine of the Church. They are the problems of the reunion of the churches and the threat of secular society and pagan religions to the Christian faith. Another ever-present problem increasing the necessity for understanding the doctrine of the Church is the relationship of the churches, that is, the Christian fellowships of which we are members, to the Church. These problems confronting present-day Christianity raise the ultimate question of the nature of the Church.

In our modern world there are many different groups with more or less significance for the life of the people who compose them. There are national, racial, ideological, religious, economic, class, social, and cultural groups. These groups may and do exist within the framework of a larger community but an harmonious existence side by side is always threatened by "the pride of a dominant group" so "that some effort is always made to preserve a coerced unity." (Niebuhr, *The Children of Light and the Children of Darkness,* p. 121.)

Some of these groups have an absolute significance for the people who compose them. The community which has an absolute significance for its members is held in existence by the absolute claim made by its members. Such a claim is derived not from any value which inheres in the group either logically or biologically or historically but is an assertion of faith. Every community which claims absolute value for itself is a faith-community.

An example of the absolute community as the assertion of faith is Communism. Harold Laski writes:

> "Faith in the Revolution possesses for its devotees the same kind of magic hold as Christianity exercised over its first followers. It is a call to what is highest in man, and a call to the fulfillment of what is highest not merely as an offering upon the altar of self, as the promotion of self-interest, but as a contribution to a fellowship in which selfhood is fulfilled in the context of a greater purpose by which it is absorbed." (Laski, *Faith, Reason, and Civilization,* p. 53.)

Margaret Cole, writing in the Fabian Quarterly for April, 1943, says:

> "Marx was a brilliant advocate: he excelled in taking his opponents and turning them inside out to suit his own moral ends. Thus he turned Hegel upside down to make the materialistic conception of history, which is a fine argumentative weapon, *and a faith to fight for* (italics mine). Similarly, in the field of economics, he countered the classics with the labour theory of value, which formulates the *faith* (author's italics) that the working class gets a rotten deal from the capitalist, but has no particular relation to the facts of economic life." (Quoted in Miller, *The Christian Significance of Karl Marx,* p. 26.)

It is true that the bond of unity within a particular community has not always been understood in this manner. In classical thought the unifying factor was conceived of as a natural capacity of man, e.g., reason. However, this con-

ception was itself a matter of faith. The religion of reason, writes C. N. Cochrane, is "an audacious anthropomorphism, a kind of sky writing which projects upon the cosmos a merely human rationality and translates it into an account of nature and of God." (Cochrane, *Christianity and Classical Culture,* p. 117.) This faith in reason as the bond of community breaks down at the point where the pursuit of human excellence by strictly human powers passes from man to the idea of superman. In this transition, inevitable in classical thought the community disappears as such and another bond of unity appears.

There is a modern parallel to this classical idea in the contemporary optimistic conception of man with its emphasis on "law" and "common humanity" as the principle of unity. Both the ideal of law and of our common humanity contain the inherent weakness which characterized the classical religion of reason.

Now all groups in history which have absolute significance for the people are faith-groups. They owe their existence and continuance not to historic accident, racial origin, shared natural capacities, social contract, natural good will, or force, although these may be involved, but rather to that faith which gives to the group its absolute meaning. In addition it should be said a faith-community disintegrates or is destroyed only by the victory of another faith.

The Church as an inclusive community does not differ from all other communities in this respect. *The existence of the Church is an affirmation of faith.* Every discussion of the Church is dependent finally upon the article of the Creed which affirms "I believe in the Holy Catholic Church."

In his recent book, *What Is Christian Civilization,* Dr. John Baillie calls attention to the fact that the Church is both *pistis* and *koinonia* (faith and fellowship). He writes that as the Age of the Enlightenment was a threat to *pistis,* the present Great Society, with its large contact groups, is a threat to *koinonia.* This is a helpful analysis and raises the urgent question of the relevance of the present parochial organization of the Church. However, the *koinonia* which is threatened is a *faith*-fellowship and the extent to which the fellowship is broken is a matter not of functional nor geographical organization, important as that may be, but of the success of an alien faith. The most serious challenge to the Church is and will remain the challenge to faith, for it is the faith which gives to the fellowship its peculiar kind of life. ". . . the Church is described in the New Testament," writes L. S. Thornton,

> "in terms of human fellowship or brotherhood. Yet the koinonia language, which emphasizes this, always points beyond it. As soon as we begin to ask wherein this fellowship consists, it is seen to draw its whole character and significance from its relation to God in and through Christ." (Thornton, *The Common Life in the Body of Christ,* p. 47.)

And perhaps it is pertinent to add that that relation is a relation of faith.

In recent years Protestant Christianity has gained, happily, a new appreciation of the corporate life of the Church. It has renounced that individualism which was expressed by Coleridge when he said, "I belong to that holy and infallible church of which I am the only member." Roman Catholicism through the Liturgi-

cal Movement is expressing this corporateness anew. This is a great advance over the individual pietism of both Protestantism and Catholicism, but the realization of corporateness is not enough. The basic question is, in what does our to-getherness consist? The urgency of that question comes out of the historic actualities which deny the reality of fellowship. The bond of unity conceived simply as to-getherness has its basis in the belief that all men are the "sons of God." Christianity has never been committed to a purely creationist doctrine of sonship. There are two ways in which men are "sons of God"; either as alienated sons or forgiven sons. The fellowship of the Church is a fellowship of redemption not of creation.

Of course the idea of the Church as community, not only locally but across denominational lines, has tremendous values, particularly in relating our common human concerns within a common framework of purpose and interest. This framework is provided in local councils of churches, the state councils, the Federal Council, and the World Council of Churches. But while the sense of community among and within the churches has been growing, the realities of historical existence have done their worst to break the community. This is the significance of Dr. Baillie's analysis summarized above. And this makes Christians ask all the more insistently in what does their community consist.

Martin Luther writes,

> ". . . there are many peoples in the world but the Christians are a peculiar people, a called people, and they are not simply ecclesia, 'church' or people but *sancta, catholica, christiana,* that is, 'a Christian, holy people', which believes in Christ." (Kerr, *Compend of Luther,* p. 124.)

The words which we use to describe the Church are words which have been formed of faith. The so-called "Notes" of the Church as One, Holy, Catholic, and Apostolic are justified in that they come from an order of existence which is beyond history. They cannot be derived either from the past nor are they a matter of future expectation within history. In terms of actual historic achievement the Church can no more be "One" than it can be "Holy," nor can it be "Apostolic" or "Catholic" any more than it can be "One." The Protestant error of moral achievement and the Catholic error of an authoritative historic institution become evident when we recognize the confessional character of these "Notes." This is not to discourage or discredit any movements toward unity but simply to recognize that the "Oneness" of the Church is an affirmation of faith (as are the other "Notes") and not a logical conclusion from first principles nor an inference from history.

If what has been said about the Church so far is true then it is impossible to discover its nature from the fact of to-getherness or corporateness alone. Assembly, logic, history are all inadequate for an understanding of the Church, as are also such religious terms as pietism, worship, ethics, and God-consciousness. The Church is revealed unto faith. "To the unbeliever there can be no church at all."

The Church in the world is one among many groups which derive their peculiar quality and character from their faith. The nature of the Church must be sought not in the meaning of faith but the nature of that faith which gives to the Church its peculiar life. The question therefore of the nature of the

Church must be resolved on the prior question what is the nature of the Christian Faith. In order to answer that question it is necessary to understand the meaning of faith from the point of view of the Christian revelation. Just as the word "Church" has acquired a distinctive Christian content so also has the word "faith."

The Christian use of the word faith has a distinctly Christian meaning. It does not mean a quality one has by nature; it does not mean that general sense of accepting the universe, causing us to "co-operate" with the laws of nature; it does not mean the assent we give to rational knowledge which we have not yet acquired; it does not mean agreement with a set of ideas or logical formulas. It is rather the affirmative decision which man makes about his life in relation to God as revealed in Christ. Faith is the "this-side" of the divine revelation. There is no revelation except to faith and there is no faith apart from revelation.

Faith, when it is considered as a purely natural capacity, is unable of itself to cross the barrier which the Gospel creates in its demand upon man. The "stumbling-block" does not lie in the human mind (the barrier is not a barrier to reason as such) but to the whole of human existence as organized apart from God. In other words faith is an assertion about both God and man and, as it is used in Christianity, is beyond the range of human achievement.

If faith is not within the possibility of human achievement then the question arises how does faith originate and how is it continued? The answer lies in the fact that man is never without some faith. Every man is a member of a group which claims absolute significance for its existence. Every man claims absolute significance for his own life. No one is ever neutral in religion. The Christian faith therefore is born in its challenge to and victory over the other faiths of man. It is always a confessional faith, and only in the confession is there the way to salvation. Of course the confession of faith itself does not save but there is no saving faith which is not confessional. ". . . if you confess with your lips that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised Him from the dead, you will be saved." (Romans 10:9.)

The Christian faith is not an abstract faith. It is not something out yonder for man to reach out after. On the contrary it is rather the basic assumption of a man's life or it isn't. It is professed by man (or it isn't) as the principle for interpreting and understanding the things which happen to him—birth and life, suffering and pain, conflict and moral struggle, work and play, sin and death. The Church of the Christian faith does not fade away into an ethereal existence. There is no invisible church. It is the faith of the *ecclesia* which transforms the relationship of man with God and man with his fellowman. The affirmation of that faith while it is a personal act is not a private nor individual act. It is the affirmation of the fellowship by which the fellowship describes its life in relation to God and to the world. In that affirmation Christian theology plays a major part for in its doctrinal propositions the Gospel-event is proclaimed as expected or remembered.

The story of the healing of the epileptic boy in Mark 9:14–29, with the confession of the father "I believe, help

my unbelief," depicts the paradoxical character of faith. Faith is both possible and impossible. It is something which man possesses and yet does not possess. Commenting on this passage, Dr. Gould in the International Critical Commentary, writes, "He claims at first that he does believe, notwithstanding any appearance to the contrary in his language. And yet he does not rest his case there, but pleads with Jesus to show him mercy in any case. He pleads the compassion of Jesus, instead of his own faith, and so unconsciously showed a genuine faith." Genuine faith is not trust in one's own faith but trust in God. There is no question of more or less faith. The question is always between faith and no faith; even a little faith removes mountains.

The Church's existence which is a matter of faith, a confessional faith, will always have two relations to the world, that of being accepted or being rejected. There is no other, although this does not overlook the preparation which goes on within the world for the acceptance of the faith. The world cannot be neutral. The modern indifference to the Church is all the more serious because the Church has been rejected not because she has proclaimed her faith but because she hasn't.

The nature of the Christian faith which has been described is not a human capacity nor an abstract ideal. It is the human response, both possible and impossible to the divine act of God in Christ which is constitutive of the Church. The Church is "'a Christian, holy people' which believes in Christ."

This argument may appear as obvious, but it is precisely the obvious which is in danger of being overlooked in a discussion of the Church. The question of what is the essential nature of the Church, of its peculiarity and uniqueness, cannot be answered on the basis of human considerations alone. Its bond of unity cannot be discovered in shared ideas, in history, nor physical to-getherness. No, not even in religious practices or ceremonial. Preaching, sacraments, worship, theology, social action presuppose a Christian community and a Christian community presupposes the Christian faith. *Extra ecclesiam nulla salus* but also, *Extra crucem nulla ecclesia.*

The existence of the Church is an affirmation of faith. This is central to the Christian doctrine of the Church. It is also the basis for any practical approach to the immediate problems of the reunion of the Churches and the relation of the Church to other groups.

One of the major obstacles to church reunion is the matter of orders. Serious as this problem is, from the point of view expressed here it is purely secondary. I belong to the Protestant Episcopal Church. I prefer the Episcopal order and polity. I am sure, however, that the existence of the Church does not depend upon these just as I am sure that it does not depend on Papal or Presbyterian or Congregational polity and order. As W. J. Pythian-Adams writes:

> "So it will be, for example, with the Sacred Ministry. Christians will understand that no order, no office in the Church can be called valid or regular save one which performs the function for which it was appointed, the building up of the Body of Love. So, on the one hand, if episcopacy survives . . . it will be because it fulfills this one necessary condition, not on the ground of its traditional origin: for it will be realized that in the living Body that which was once vital *may* outlive its usefulness and be-

come an obstruction, not a channel, for the flow of Love. And so, on the other hand, it will be remembered that it is Christ, not any one or any group of His members, who ordains the helps and governments which are to perfect His saints: and no office however recent, which He seems to have blessed and fructified, will lightly be 'made common'." (Pythian-Adams, *The People and the Presence,* pp. 281–282.)

In its relation to the world and other groups in the world the Church of faith exists as a challenge. It holds its faith over against the secular and pagan faiths which give absolute significance to the people who make up the separate communities. The Church cannot retreat to a minority position without renouncing its responsibility to remain on the front lines and to challenge a world which chooses that faith which leads only unto the resurrection of eternal death. From this point of view the Church while exercising a sincere humility before God, does not have to justify itself by its results. The same thing applies to the Church as Kierkegaard wrote of the individual,

> "If a man sets himself a goal for his endeavor here in this life, and he fails to reach it, then, in the judgment of eternity, it is quite possible that he may be blameless. Yes, he may even be worthy of praise. He might have been prevented by death, or by an adversity that is beyond his control: in which case he is entirely without blame. He might even have been prevented from reaching the goal just by being unwilling to use other means than those which the judgment of eternity permits. In which case by his very renunciation of the impatience of passion and the inventions of cleverness, he is even worthy of praise. He is not therefore, eternally responsible for whether he reaches his goal within the world of time. But without exception, he is eternally responsible for the kind of means he uses." (Kierkegaard, *Purity of Heart,* pp. 187–188.)

Of course the Church should be humbled by the justified criticisms which have been and are directed toward her; however she remains sensitive first of all not to the criticisms of others but to the demand for the fulfillment of the commission which she has received from her Lord. The Christian Church—the fellowship of Christian Faith admits no judgment other than the judgment of God. The criterion of her validity lies in the kind of redemption she offers. The difference among the faiths held by the varying groups is revealed in the quality of life which each group manifests and the adequacy each has for the understanding of our human condition. Christianity is not to be judged by reason nor by history but by the kind of life which the Christian faith produces—not of course in a single individual but in the whole Christian fellowship. The doctrine of the Church is bound up finally with the manner and fruit of salvation through Christ. That salvation is the work of the Word of God which creates and sustains the Christian Faith.

> "Faith," writes H. E. Lovell Cocks, ". . . is final assurance of God and the question is not what degree of confidence in an immanent God or in a divinely endowed human nature will suffice us in the halcyon days, but what will bear us up when all other props have been swept away. No doctrine of immanence, no hierarchy of values, no 'vision', no 'moral earnestness' can be the rock of our salvation, but only the Word that judges us and wins from us the confession of guilt and impotence, coming to us amid the ruins of our fallen temples with the promise of a house not made with hands for an eternal habitation." (Cocks, *By Faith Alone,* p. 40.)

BOOK REVIEWS

I CHOSE FREEDOM. THE PERSONAL AND POLITICAL LIFE OF A SOVIET OFFICIAL, *by Victor Kravchenko.* Scribner's, 1946. 496 pp. $3.50.

This book does not make life any easier for us. While reading it you will sleep badly; and after finishing it you will find our gloomy world still gloomier than you did before. For we have got to come to terms, nay, to a genuine understanding with the Soviet men; there is no alternative. But how can we come to an understanding with organized terror?

There can be little doubt that the gist of K.'s frightful stories is true. Those of us who cared, have always known that the Soviet secret police is above the law and the constitution (art. 113 of the constitution of 1936), that it is omnipresent, spying in the factory as in the home, that it operates concentration camps and forced labor on a very large scale (indirectly confirmed by Wendell Willkie), and that the Nazis admired and studied the thoroughness of this system just as much as they despised the laxity of their Italian teachers. In a sense, then, the book tells us absolutely nothing that is new. But it still makes a vast difference whether you know generalities or go through the harrowing experience of reading the description of millionfold death by starvation in the civil war and again in the collectivization crisis of 1932–33, aggravated by the brutality with which the regime forced the starving into its collectivized pattern; or the stories of the beautiful women whose husbands the police spirit away and, under some ludicrous accusation, torture, for years if need be, until the woman, in order to free the wreck, at last gives in to the unceasing pressure and consents to make her beauty a tool in the unsavory trade of spying on friends, comrades, or foreigners, depending on the terms of her special assignment, with or without the freedom of having some days a week for herself, but always with the obligation of reporting every contact; or the account of the trading of the industrial managers with the management of concentration camps for the use of thousands of forced laborers, like our chain gangs but on a thousandfold scale; or the description of the servility and Byzantinism in the inner circles of high Soviet officials, living in a guilded world utterly remote from the people or, for that matter, the war.

The author was a member of the Soviet Purchasing Commission in the U. S., from which he escaped into American privacy in 1944; his record in the Soviet industrial system must have been a distinguished one. We said that there is no reason for distrusting the gist of his story. The story, however, is distinctly overdone, overspecific in the description of every gesture, every facial expression, and every word in hundreds of fateful conversations with all sorts of people in the Ukraine, the Urals, Siberia, and Moscow within a span of almost thirty years. Human memory does not work that way; the author obviously has instrumented and dramatized his story, to the disadvantage of the impression it makes. Toward the end the author more

and more indulges generalizations of his experiences. His analyses are unoriginal, crude, and unfair. He ignores that the collectivization of agriculture, when it ran into the furious resistance which resulted in the great famine, gave way to a compromise, which appeased the peasants and may well go down in social history as a major turning point. His theory that the government through its slovenliness lost the first phase of the Hitler war and the Russian people, equipped by American lend-lease, won the second phase, is absurd; history does not work in such easy distinctions. His description of the Soviet industrial system as one where whims and inefficiency frustrate every serious effort is also refuted by results, even though twenty years of industrial training have not sufficed to make the scores of millions of peasants into expert industrial workers —the analogous development in the Western countries took many generations. And every American tank lieutenant can tell the author that the Russian tanks were better than the Nazi tanks, which were better than the American tanks. He does not recognize a single Soviet achievement. The turn of the official ideology to national history and literature, the readmission of religion, everything that Timasheff summarizes under the name of the "Great Retreat" from communist ideology, is presented by K. as a mere hoax to fool the people and the foreign nations as long as necessary. The number of people in forced labor is given as 20 millions, without as much as a shadow of documentation; there is no reason why the number should not be either half or twice that.

The enemies of Russia praise the book into the sky; her admirers denounce it as a collection of vicious lies. Both are wrong. The truth is that everything, achievements as well as lawlessness and brutality, is excessive in Russia, a country where the respect for the sanctity of the law has never been woven into the national heritage, and where the Soviet elite, for all ideological changes of recent years, is still informed by the doctrine that, if it only accomplishes its economic ends by whatever means, it thereby guarantees eternal bliss to mankind.

EDUARD HEIMANN

MEN UNDER STRESS, *by Roy R. Grinker, Lt. Col., M.C., and John P. Spiegel, Major, M.C. (Army Air Forces).* Blakiston: Philadelphia, 1945. Pp. 484; XII; index. $5.00.

"The returned soldier comes back not a strong hero, but physically and psychologically depleted," say Grinker and Spiegel in this important book about "men under stress, in combat and after." This is one of the observations made at the end of the book in a very revealing chapter entitled, "General Social Implications." The authors point out that many men, having paid the high price of risking their lives in a war they did not understand or want to take part in, feel that "the army, even the government, is owed nothing but resentment, antagonism or hatred." In an early chapter entitled, "Motivation for Combat—Morale," they declare that "fortunately, strong intellectual motivation has not proved to be of first importance to good morale in combat." And they add, "The danger of this lack seems to be less to the prospect of military success than to success in the peace and to stability in the postwar period."

Morale was built on *esprit de corps,* or, to use Grinker's and Spiegel's terms, identification of the individual with the group, the combat unit. This identification was intensive but not extensive. It did not include a large group—certainly not the whole army. And it did not spring from strong patriotic feelings. The average soldier's attitude was one of "passive acceptance" and the only other motivation for fighting, risking, sacrificing, suffering and perhaps dying (besides loyalty to "his own small group") was the desire to get home. "From an idea, to a wish, to an all-embracing, increasing and overpowering longing, thoughts of home, home, home finally dominated the soldier's whole existence." Home is (or *was*) believed to be the *summum bonum,* utopia, heaven; and one entered this never-never land by a rebirth but without repentance: "Actually the return home to 'a brave new world' is fantasied as a rebirth after the personal psychological death symbolized by repetitive combat missions." When he finds home does not—as it cannot—live up to such a fantasy, he is "in a peculiarly dissatisfied and often disturbed state of mind." Having learned to identify himself with a group he is likely to do so again and this time for purposes more likely (in his own imagination, at least) to satisfy his self-interest.

It must be added immediately, and emphasized, that Grinker and Spiegel think that the prophecies regarding the great postwar sociological problem—that many of the returned veterans would be hardened "killers"—are pure nonsense. Whatever aggression and hostilities are shown by veterans are for the most part due to the underlying resentment already mentioned; and are a manifestation of a regression caused by a lack of adequate motivation and preparation in the first place.

In the closing chapter, the authors draw a word-picture of the American ideal: the strong independent individual. This they put in sharp contrast to the actual men as they observed them in wide associations both with the Air Corps and the Ground Forces. It is a disturbing picture. And to this reviewer it is disturbing not only because of the marked divergence between the ideal and the real, but also because the ideal itself helps to cause the divergence. There cannot be, I believe, strong individuality without a deeper sense of community than is allowed for in the American ideal as Grinker and Spiegel outline it—and they reflect faithfully the general belief which has animated this country for the past fifty or seventy-five years.

Fortunately for our forefathers, community was real if not the ideal: even the pioneer not only had to contend with it but his sense of sharing a great enterprise with others was an essential aspect of the faith and feeling which gave meaning to his life. What Whitman called "adhesiveness" was a part of American life. When he spoke of the individual he thought of him in the same way as did Emerson: the "infinitude of the private man" which causes him to reach out and find his ultimate meaning in communion. So Whitman could declare:

> "One's-self I sing, a simple separate person,
> Yet utter the word Democratic, the word En-Masse."

Today the individual is thought of more as finite, atomic (an ominously ambiguous word!), and his own end. Actually he needs "adhesiveness," the community, to fulfill his own life, just as the community needs a *voluntary* adhesiveness to preserve its existence—a fact which the war has adequately proved.

Not every one will want to read all of *Men Under Stress*. A great deal of it does not deal with these wider socio-religious problems. Indeed much of the book is taken up with individual case histories—many of which are fascinating. But it is well worth going through rather carefully at least to pick out whatever one finds to interest him. The first eight chapters and the last two should interest the general reader. I found Chapter Six on "Psychodynamics" very interesting; and was delighted to read in Chapter Nineteen, on "Applications to Civilian Psychiatry," that Grinker and Spiegel say, "Not only is the concept of rebirth through therapy a neurotic manifestation and an infantile magical concept of the patient, but it is also a wish for a magical state of omnipotence by the psychiatrist." Sane and sober words at a time when out of desperation we may turn to so-called saviors who in many instances have little more to recommend them than a bland assurance of innocence which covers up a naive will to power. The wish for magic, in its classical western expression, is always based on a bargain with the devil: you give me power and I'll give you my soul. The devil's posing as a savior—indeed the "savior's" believing himself to be animated by nothing but good will—is hardly a new strategem for the Father of Lies.

RICHARD W. DAY

GOERDELER'S POLITISCHES TESTAMENT. DOKUMENTE DES ANDEREN DEUTSCHLAND. New York: Friedrich Krause, 1945. 67 pp.

It is very necessary that we learn more about the background of the conspiracy which, in July 1944, came close to killing Hitler and overthrowing his regime. The New York *Times* recently reported in a lengthy account that no less than five thousand men were implicated and executed, which certainly proves that it was not an insignificant enterprise. But the great number and leading part in it of active generals and diplomats left open the suspicion that what aroused them was not Hitlerism, but the growing shadow of military disaster. To clarify the intellectual and moral background, this slim volume about the central figure of the plot, Karl Goerdeler, is highly welcome.

Not everything in the booklet is worth while. The introduction by the editor certainly is not when it protests against Goebbels' allegations that Goerdeler had been engaged in dark machinations against the fatherland. Goerdeler's own testament, for the most part, is a critique of Hitler's economic and foreign policies in terms of an old-fashioned, conventional analysis, such as one expects of a very decent, social-minded, conservative official. The two documents here published rise to considerable height, however, in two places; in the scathing analysis of the Munich pact of 1938: "Only a good friend of the dictators or an inexperienced youth could do this. I can only believe that Mr. Chamberlain and his clique of aristocrats are themselves fascists and dream of saving the profit system with the aid of National Socialism"; and in the impassioned

moral indictment of Nazism: "In view of the determination of the Nazi rulers to maintain themselves in power and use even the most brutal means to this end, the German people have a hard path of suffering ahead of them. . . . With inescapable logic the party is forced to fight the Christian faith as such. . . . National Socialism delivers itself to the judgment of God." This man was no opportunist.

Except for the judgment, everything hinges on the dates of the documents. They are the sensational thing in the volume. The memorandum about Munich was written in Germany in October, 1938, and addressed to an American friend. And the so-called testament, with its economic analysis and its moral indictment, bears the date: New York, December 1, 1937. So Goerdeler was among us, consulting with his friend Bruening and looking for help. He returned home to resume his bitter way of conspiracy and final martyrdom, exactly as did Dietrich Bonhoeffer.

Several lessons follow. The general lesson is clear: there were courage, honor, and faith left in Germany, despite the assurances to the contrary by writers in the safety and comfort of New York. But there also is a more specific lesson: not everybody who assumed public functions in Germany accepted the regime. In a way one can say that any one who produced a loaf of bread in Nazi Germany helped the Nazis. On the other hand, the people had to eat in order to outlive the Nazis. Goerdeler gave up the mayoralty of Leipzig when the Nazis removed the statue of Felix Mendelssohn, the composer; he did not find this too small an occasion for a public protest. But he could never have built up the vast machine of his plot if he had kept protesting all the time; he had to lie low at times. Let those of us who have not voluntarily gone through that hell be wary in judging the actions of brave men on the basis of external evidence.

EDUARD HEIMANN